Mrs. Lillian Riste
Innisfail, Alberta.

MARKERVILLE, ICELANDIC SETTLEMENT

DAN MARKEBERG: Came here in 1899 to start the creamery. Stated that Markerville was first named Tindostoll but because Dr. Marker, the Dairy Commissioner of Alberta and Superintendent of Creameries of the North West Territories at that time, had so much to do getting the government creamery started at that place (replacing the cheese factory) that the settlers wanted to name their post office Markerville for Dr. Marker.

Mr. D. Markeberg and Dr. Marker formed an association and bought the old cheese factory and started up the creamery to make butter as a company.

The meaning of Tindostoll: stoll: chair or stool; tindo: the highest peak or tinda of the mountains.

At that time there were 30 Icelandic families--"Our's was the only Danish family."

Among these 30 families was the poet laureate of Iceland, Stephan G. Stephansen.

The first school was Hola (hill) school. If you hear an Icelander say: "I or he went to Hola school", in Iceland that means the highest schooling possible there. I or he was very well educated.

The first school at Tindostoll was log. The first creamery and one store were the only two buildings with shingles.

Mr. Markeberg has made many trips to Calgary with oxen.

Nearest doctor was at Calgary. "We just could not afford to be sick."

Heckla was another later Innisfail school. Heckla in Iceland was the very biggest volcano. All the material for Markerville wooden buildings was hauled in from Calgary.

The first bridge over the Medicine River out there was at Hola School. Later, when iron bridge was built there the swinging bridge was bought by Mr. Markeberg and put across same river at Msrkerville because his house is directly across from Markerville so instead of going around by iron bridge just east of Markerville he and his family and friends could go across on swinging bridge. It has been taken out, now.

In 1917 - '21 during the "landslide" in the government, Mr. Markeberg became M.L.A.

(Captain Eric Markeberg has returned from overseas from the war and was given a grand reception.) He is a son of Dan's.

Some of the names Mr. Markeberg gave me and the dates of arrival were:

Johan Bjornsson 1888
Joseph Stephensen 1889
Stephan G. Stephansen 1889 (poet)
John Christiansen 1889 (translator)

This latter gentleman has a set of a volume of Stephan G. Stephansen's poems and the only one I saw of Stephan G. Stephansen's letter, being his 7 volume.

Sennecca root, a' plenty, at first, all along the Medicine river. None now. Indians used it extensively as a medicine.

In Iceland the woman takes her own name, even after marriage, but adds "the wife of Mr.".....". A man takes his father's first name and adds son to that.

Mr. Markerville took me all through the Markerville modern creamery at Markerville. A credit to man and vicinity.

Mrs. Markeberg gave me the following recipes:

1. vina tarta: (make 7 layers:

4 eggs

1 cup shortening

1/2 cup milk

1 teaspoon vanilla

cordamom 1/2 teaspoon ground up

3 teaspoon baking powder

Flour to make like cookie dough. Spread out flat and round.

Put the following filling on:

25 cents prunes. Boil and then stone. Put on to boil again with a little water.

1/2 cup sugar and cordamom.

Boil together till thick. Put between 7 layers. Bake.

Looks nice and eats nice. Cuts like cake, cold.

2. "Punnakakur" (by several ladies of Iceland)
Make real thin pancake dough. Put some into iron skillet. Turn it and let get all around. Bake. Spread with jam. Roll up. (Boys called these "Emblems of Iceland". Eat with coffee for lunches.

3. Rosettes: Dip an iron (with depressions like a patty pan) into batter. Bake brown; turn. Good.

"Rublupylsur" (Meat roll):
Take a large slice of meat, lay it flat. Spread with cloves, allspice, pepper, salt, a very little salt petre, chipped onion. Roll up very tight onto board. Turn board over. Put on heavy weights to flatten it and press well together. Later wrap in wax paper. Keeps well.

Cookies: 1 lb. white flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 lb. butter
1/4 lb. sugar
2 eggs.
Melt butter, add sugar and baking powder. Knead a little with rolling pin, to flatten. Cut into cookies. Put some sugar and almonds on top dough. Bake. Beat up egg white for top with little sugar.

I came across an old "Province" for Sept. 24, 1908, where the change of paper names occurred. It was the last copy of the "Free Lance" before it was joined with the "Innisfail Province" into one.

In it I came across this article: "The Creameries Increase Output" dated at Edmonton, Sept. 21, 1908. We look for an increase of 20% over last year in the output of the creameries of Alberta. Then it went on to quote extensively Mr. Marker on that important industry.

THORDUR THOMPSON

Came to Markerville in 1901 from Redivick, Iceland. Had horses at first. Dr. George, Innisfail's first doctor, was nearest doctor. Came with horses when he was sent for.

Mr. Thompson worked in Calgary quite a bit. He is a bachelor yet.

Had a farm. Good grass. Prairie fires burned his hay one year.

No one saw any money at first. 10¢ for butterfat. Farmers received 2 or 3 dividends in a year. In 1903 the pay cheques all came from Ottawa. It took one month for a cream cheque to return to you.

We had almost no suits at all. But they were cheap: $5 - $10 a suit--but where the cash to come from? Now, some suits are $60.

All of a sudden he turned and took his hat. "I'm going home to shave," he said curtly. Then turned and smiled and said, "No barber shops in early days. Some "big bugs" shaved so often as once a week." And was gone.

STEPHEN G. STEPHENSEN

1853 - 1927.

Famous Poet

Faeddur A. Island 1853

Dainn 1927.

"Tho' you have trodden in travel
"All the wide trails of the earth
"Bear yet the dreams of your bosom
"Back to the land of your birth."

Above writing is on that poet's cairn in their private cemetery just above the picturesque and slow flowing Medicine river. It is an inspiration to visit that small cemetery enclosed with heavy, square posts through which a heavy chain is pulled. The family cemetery is private and has heavy iron lattice gates.

Inside the cairn is a metal box holding his 6 volumes of poems. There is a 7th volume but it is of his correspondence, very interesting. Among other things of historical setting we noted the dates and post office addresses on his letters. I believe it would tell, as well as anyway, the progress of the postal system for Markerville settlers in its earliest days.

These are the addresses of the poet's letters, and the dates on them as we found them in his 7th volume, his correspondence:

Calgary, 17 June, 1881
Cash City, 22 Sept, 1889
" " Dec., 1889
" " 28 May 1890
" " 19 July 1890
" " Aug. 1890
" " 8 Oct. 1890
" " Dec. 1890
" " Jan. 1891
" " 13 Apr. 1891
" " Aug. 1891
" " Sept. 1891
Poplar Grove 25 Nov. 1891
" " 8 Jan. 1892
Tindostall 23 Oct. 1892
" 4 Mar. 1893
11 Dec. 1893
14 Jan. 1894
23 Mar. 1895

He went surveying--one letter addressed from Pokan P.O. summer 1896.

Tindostall July 1897
" Oct. 1897
" Dec. 1897
" Dec. 1897
" July 1897
" Feb. 1902
" Apr. 1902

Markerville 22 Dec. 1902

11 Apr. 1909

He died in 1927. Then a letter was found and added: Heima (home)--Easter Sunday, 1909. This was to Jones Hall. That was his last letter.

Across the trail from his house was the school house, on a hill, its name was Hola (meaning "hill"). That was in 1895-1896.

In 1897 was the Diamond Jubilee during Queen Victoria's reign.

This was the nearest school and the Stephansen's children all attended.

One of Stephansen's short poems in English translation reads:

"Bjorr Faerik per" Beer I bring thee
Bold warrior
Brewage of good health
And greatest honour.

(Only poetry in English in all 6 vols. of his poems.

I visited the old home of Stephen G. Stephensen, saw the bay window where he wrote poetry, days--and the same disk where he wrote poetry, nights, and at which that volume of correspondence was penned. The family came in before the C. & E. railway did.

The name on the 6 volumes of poetry is "Andvokur" meaning "Sleepless Nights". They date , 1909 - 1923. In 1873 he came to Wisconsin from Iceland, being 20 years old then. He was born in 1853 and Mrs. Stephensen was born

in 1859. They were first cousins and were married when she was 19 years of age and he 25 years of age, 1878. They had 8 children, 4 boys born in North Dakota, and 3 girls and 1 boy born near Markerville, Alberta. Mrs. Stephensen farmed and liked it. He thought and took notes in fields and wrote nights. Wrote some poetry in North Dakota but most of it was written here and at night, late at night too before the words had all been recorded.

In North Dakota he worked in lumber camps.

He, like all the early settlers, was hard up and worked hard. Once in Alberta he was away on a survey gang.

There were no bridges over any of the rivers when he first came--had to ford them. He travelled to Calgary twice a year for groceries. He worked on the railroad construction gang when it was being put through.

June 17: Markerville celebrates the birthday. Mr. Stephensen, farmer, poet, was very fond of animals and all wild life. No one dared carry a gun on his farm and his boys say he allowed no gun in his home. All wild life was precious to him.

He was a rather small man , 5 ft. 6 in. tall, well set-up, fair health, which was good until one year before his death, when he seemed "not quite up to par".

Mrs. Stephensen had good health. One year before her death she fell and broke her hip. But plucky, as always, she got around the house by the aid of a cane and some times, help from children.

Mr. Stephensen was self-educated--never went one day to any school. Well, then, what shall we say? Was that poetry inspired?

An Icelander translated this beautiful poem, "Toast to Alberta" to me, thus:

"You Province, you pretty province,
In the arms of the mountains.
You're our young foster mother.
Your warm, your soft bosom
By the warm morning sun
With your silver clear rivers
And prairies and rocky palaces (halls)
With many a green spruce side hill.
And glowing winter snows.
You reach out your valley arms
With ridges and hills and ravines,
And many a wood where you can get shelter (from weather)
With green prairie and hundreds of ripples of waters.
And with bright nights in spring
And northern lights on your north-most mountains.
And the white frost on the red rose on damp summer mornings
And the spring-like winter clouds that race across the sun.
The winter-like clouds that race along in summer.
My young foster-mother surrounded by mountains.
For liberty and the good of the nation stand guard
Take to you many an Icelander in exile."

....(And goes on to say he wants Alberta to go on as long as it can with its frost and steel to overrun against money,

power and religious oppression.) Translator: Mr. John Christiansen, librarian in Markerville.

The last year of Mr. Stephensen he was almost an invalid. He had a stroke in Dec. 1926 and another in Aug. 1927--never came out of that one.

I saw his handwritingon a card. It was a good hand. His wife nor any child could write poems. A Mr. Kirkkonnel translated for him. Jacabina Johnson could and did translate for him and does his poems yet. She, herself, was a good poetess. She was in Iceland two years, going from Canada.

The Stephanson family met with tragedy, too. One 16 year old boy was killed by lightening. Then, while going home from her mother's funeral, one of the daughters was killed in an auto accident.

The Icelandic government invited Mr. Stephensen to come to Iceland--he was the guest of honor of that government and was taken to visit the place of his birth.

Upon his return to Canada, Mr. Stephensen told an artist what his home in Iceland looked like. He was much pleased with the picture of small buildings just opposite the gap in the long ridge of hills, a beautiful scene, a wonderful location, near a little lake. All of Mr. Stephensen's expenses were paid to and from Iceland. When he was about to return to Canada the government presented him with 500 Kroners: more than $1000 in our coin.

In his favorite room I saw his glasses, a bookcase, a cane from Iceland (on his visit) with Stephan G. Stephansen and name of place where it was presented to him, Isfirdingum. A harp of gold was on the top end--inlaid. Silver inlaid in beautiful patterns, elsewhere on it.

In the bookcase is the "Saga Library" of several large volumes. "Saga" means stories. One book, "Hallgrimur Pjetursson", hymns and biblical poetry mostly. One book by Jon Olafsson, "Humor and Songs". There is one frame containing 18 Icelandic poets and writers: one was Hallgrimur Pitursson who wrote hymns and biblical poems. One of Jon Olafsson who wrote humor and songs. I saw a good bracket lamp--brass. A good, fancy brass clock sitting on his desk. A photo of Stevensen, the explorer, and a dear friend of our poet. One photo of our poet and his home in Iceland. One photo of a sod church in Iceland where Stephansen was confirmed. Iceland presented Stephansen with a very large oil painting of Indians--bushland, teepees, an old Indian in the foreground. Another very large oil painting depicting Indians fleeing from a raging fire in the timber over the hills, 3 horses in that picture, 2 pack horses with an Indian running and leading each horse and an Indian squaw on the third horse. Humans and horses looked weary in their desperate attempt to keep ahead of those raging, high flames.

Mr. Stephansen had more time to write poetry in his last years.

I saw a lovely photo of Mrs. Stephansen standing

beside Mr. Stephansen's cairn, there at their lovely, quiet, family cemetry.

Due credit must be extended to Mrs. Stephansen who managed the work and riased a good healthy family and travelled side by side with her poet husband and still carried on after his death.

I think much of the beauty and grandeur of the "Toast to Alberta" as translated to me line by line has been taken away in "To Albera" as found in "Readers" and elsewhere.

Mr. Stephansen was a good mixer he taught all the young men to swim, properly. He also taught them all to wrestle. He was important on the rifle range in 1904. Mrs. Stephansen had "open house" even when so poor, "Come in and eat, boys" was her cheery invitation.

Pot-luck, much or little in the house, always open house.

Porridge for supper, "Come in", the same. That inscription on his cairn was taken from one of his own poems entitled:

REMEMBRANCE.

1. "Tho' you have trodden in travel
All the wide tracts of the earth,
Bear yet the dreams of your bosom
Back to the land of your birth.
Kin of volcano and floe-sea!
Cousin of geyser and steep!
Daughter of downland and moorland!
Son of the reef and the deep!"

2. "High over heaven and landscape
Haunting your thought as it strays,
Torrents and towering summits
Tremble once more to your gaze.
Far in the uttermost ocean;
The isle of your heart is awake
Shining in shadowless summer,
Showered with light for your sake."

3. "Vivid that Icelandic vision
Viewed in your dreams as you run
Granite rocks growing with flowers,
Glaciers warm in the sun.
O kin of volcano and floe-sea!
Cousin of geyser and steep!
Daughter of downland and moonland!
Son of the reef and the deep.....page 165.....

Another of his odes to the prairies he loved is:

NORTHERN PRAIRIE.

"By prairie and slough-side the train that we rode
Drove ever relentessly north.
To our left the great river lay turpid and red
And sprawled itself sullenly forth.
It's beat never quickened in rapid or fall,
It's dull, heavy waters were fain
To waddle forever with arms full of mud
And the slummocky clay of the plain.
The landscape unchanged and unchangeable stood,
Save only where dryads of grace

Had woven on edges of wandering brooks,
A leafy embroidery of lace.
But the land itself lay like an infinite board,
Unslivered, unknotted and clean,
As if all the stuff of creation were smoothed
And stained an ineffable green."

"Northern Prairie" was taken from page 16$ of "The N.A. Book of Icelandic Verse."

Some boys had just returned from an Icelandic home and when asked by mother if they were ready for supper, gave this answer: "No, how could we be hungry? We had coffee and emblems of Iceland,"--meaning rolled jam pancakes.

Every home you enter, you must have coffee and lunch. Everyone!

Bjornsson means "bear son". All names of men and places mean something.

One of Mr. Stephansen's poems, "At Close of Day"--"vio" verkolok"--after all day's work is done.

The first 11 families and 3 bachelors were:

1. Barney Johnson
2. Johann Bjornsson
3. Benidict Olafson
4. Benidict Bardal (the freighter)
5. Sigurdur Bjorusson
6. Jonas Sunford
7. Dr. Einar Johnson (homeopath)
8. Olafur Goodman

9. Olafur Espihol

10. John Arnason

11. Sigurdur Joshua

3 bachelors were: Gudmundur Thorkalson

Olafur Benidictson

John Einarson

All these 11 families and 3 bachelors came in 1888. These were the ones that sent 2 back to Calgary for lumber to make a boat to ferry all over the Big Red Deer river.

JOE JOHNSON

(Mrs. Hansen Markerville's hotel keeper's brother (brother's wife ?) sic.

We have, yet, in Markerville, a library some of it 50 years old. It has been and is well read.

In early days it was hard to get stuff from wholesalers in Calgary. Stores were handling sugar, tobacco, coffee. Some times he was short of all--rivers high--raining all the time--roads "out of sight" so he'd say. "No sugar, no coffee, no tea, but lots of chewing tobacco." Those were early experiences of Markerville.

Mr. Johnson owned 1/2 of a cow and 1/2 of a cook stove. At one place a family with 3 girls and a family with 3 boys owned 1/2 of a cow and 1/2 of a cook stove.

One company of men came from Calgary with oxen. There were 11 families and 3 bachelors. When they came to the Big Red Deer river (up by way of the Little Red Deer district that had been settled since 1883) these sturdy

pioneers found the river so high and furious they knew they could not ford it. So the eleven families and one bachelor camped right there while they sent two bachelors, Oliver Benidictson and G. Thorkalson, back to Calgary with oxen to get lumber to make a boat to ferry all and goods across to Cash City post office on the other side and thence on up north to Markeville, their chosen new home.

I wasn't told how long that took--tired oxen and two men, all the way back to Calgary. Had just come from there about 90 miles distant, now a trip of 180 miles with oxen to get lumber for boats. But they went, they returned, they made boats, they crossed safely, and got to Markerville, too.

Oliver Esp was the first to finish a house in the new settlement. He made the new boat, too. "He was the know how."

No survey. All "squatted" along the beautiful Medicine river. They had an eye for beauty, at that time, instead of farm value. Hay and water for stock and fish aplenty in the river. Cattle and horses did quite well.

Most settlers had log houses, sod roofs, no flooring, just swept dirt floors. Made their own brooms of willow switches.

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To get the settlement's milk across the river to Markerville cheese factory two small boys rowed the boat

across the Medicine river. They took a big barrel of milk, 2 gallons, 200 lbs., across each time. "The Medicine River Ferry" those boys named their business. Good, steady boys and biz. like to name it, too.

One time a twelve year old boy undertook to "ferry" a strange man across the Medicine river. The boat got out of control, went end ways, and soaked the new man, but he was glad to get over to the other side. He had been scared. The boy wasn't scared. But the man was so glad he showed it by giving that boy all of 10 cents. Boy felt really rich. No money in those days.

One healthy, independent woman used to walk to Markerville often. She knit all the way while walking that road, or trail.

A boat was built up the river farther for the school children to ferry themselves across to the Hola school. "Hola" means "hill". The school was then on the hill across trail from Stephan G. Stephansen's house (that man was Markerville's famous poet in the Icelandic language). The Hola School is now on the banks of the scenic Medicine river right near an iron bridge. Hola school's three teachers' names I learned, were Johnny Goodmanson, for three months, poor teacher; Miss Ryan, 4 months, a good teacher; Mr. Disher. The last named, one day, banged two small boys' heads togetner. An older sister of one of those boys left school with her small brother, rowed that boat across, anchored it and hurried on home. Never heard how the rest of the children got home that night with no boat on their

side of the river.

Mr. Johnson's mother made moccasins for one and all of her family and her sons' families. She took a cow hide, shaved the hair off with a sharp knife, soaked the skin real well, shaved and scraped off more hair, then drew and pulled it till dry. Untanned as it was she had a pattern by which she made moccasins for her relatives, for every-day use. She made finer, softer ones of sheep skins for Sunday. She also spun, from their own sheep's wool, all the clothing for her relatives--socks, underwear, mitts.

Erik Erikson, had a loom and did much weaving for all, too.

The Markerville ladies organized a Ladies' Aid Society named the "Vonin" meaning "hope". It has been in existance for 50 years, now.

One man attempted to cross the Medicine river when it was raging and high. The team dashed into the high water. But when well into the high water the wagon box full of lumber arose and left the wagon runing gears. The team took the runing gears on across the river. The man rode on that load of lumber on down that flooding river. Was he sacred? When asked that, he said, "Scared? I should say not. I had sense enough to sit still and enjoy that boat ride. It was like being on the finest boat."

A Mr. Sigurdson took a big hand in developing the community. One time that gentleman walked to Calgary to get work. He had written and procured work on a ranch. As he neared the ranch he trotted and even ran after walking all

that way from Markerville.

In 1917 the Johnson's got a little carved box with a lid, like the ones in Iceland that all foods are set on the table in.

Same year they received a spoon made of a cow horn, black and shiny, as a souvenir of the Millenium of the Icelandic government.

The Icelandic government is claimed to be the oldest government parliament in the world. The bowl of that spoon from cow's horn had been heated then bant into shape of spoon.

I saw Icelandic money, some very old, at the Johnson home.

I saw, there, a brass seal, 200 years old, with initials to seal letters and documents.

Also a carved bowl "askur" pronounced like Oscar. Not used in America but in Iceland.

In Iceland there is natural hot water from underground currents. Seems queer it should be named Iceland--not so cold as Newfoundland which is further south.

PETER THOMPSON

Mrs. Bruce Smith was a Miss Thompson and can recall her old parents' early life near Markerville. The father's name was Peter Thompson, both he and his wife were Norwegians.

They came in 1902 from Duluth with eight children arriving May 9th.

Five families came together landing in Innisfail May 9, 1902. Came out to homestead and celebrated their arrival on a large hill near the old homestead.

Thompson house was built first and was large--all the five families lived in it at first after all had helped build it. They built other houses as they could.

Freighted stuff here from Duluth. Mrs. Smith has a high cupboard and a reflector bracket lamp in her kitchen, in the old house, yet.

Mrs. Thompson was a midwife. Dr. Allan came from Innisfail on some cases, driving horses.

ICELANDIC PANCAKES

2 eggs
1/3 cup sugar
1/4 t. salt
1/2 t. cinnamon
1/2 t. soda
1-1/2 t. boiling water
1/2 cup sour cream
1-1/2 cup flour
1 t. baking powder
2 cups milk
1/2 t. vanilla.

Beat the eggs and then add the sugar, salt and cinnamon. Dissolve the soda in the boiling water and mix with the sour cream. Add this to the first mixture. Sift the flour with the baking powder and add to the first mixture also. Then add the milk and the vanilla. Mix until thoroughly blended.

Use a fairly heavy griddle or skillet to cook these on. Rub the bottom of the pan with butter which is tied in a small cloth. Lift the pan off the fire while you pour about 1/5 cup of the batter on it. Tip the griddle around until the entire bottom is covered.

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"Joe Johnson."

[Mrs. Hansen (Markerville's hotel keeper's, brother.]

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Post Office, on the other side & thence on up north to Markerville, their chosen new home.

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Miss Ryan – 4 months – a good teacher.
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of one of those boys left school with her small
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sharp knife, soaked the skin real well, shaved
& scraped off more hair – then drew & pulled
it till dry. Untanned as it was she had a
pattern by which she made moccasins for
her relatives, for every day use. She made
finer, softer ones of sheep skins for Sunday.
She also spun, from their own sheep's wool,
all the clothing for her relatives – socks, under-
wear, mitts.

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The Markerville ladies organized a Ladies Aid Society name the "Vonin" meaning "hope." It has been in existance for 50 years, now.

One man attempted to cross the Red. River when it was raging & high. The team dashed into the high water. But when well into the high water the wagon box full of lumber arose & left the wagon runing gears. The team took the runing gears on across the river. The man rode on that load of lumber on down that flooding river. Was he scared? When asked that, he said," Scared? I should say not. I ~~just~~ had sense enough to sit still & enjoy that "boat ride". It was like being on the finest boat."

A Mr. Sigurdson took a big hand in developing the community. One time that gentleman walked to Calgary to get work. He had written & procured work on a ranch. As he neared the ranch he trotted & even ran after walking all that way from Markerville.

In 1917 the Johnsons got a little carved box with a lid, like the ones in Iceland that all foods are set on the table in.

Same year they recieved a spoon made of a cow horn — black & shiny, as a souvenir of the Millenium of the Icelandic Govt.

The Icelandic Govt. is claimed to be the oldest Govt. Parliament in the world. The bowl of that spoon from cow's horn had been heated then bent into shape of spoon.

I saw Icelandic money, some very old, at the Johnson home.

I saw, there, a brass seal, 200 years old, with initials to seal letters & documents.

Also a carved bowl "askur" pronounced like Oscar. Not used in America but in Iceland.

In Iceland there is natural hot water from underground currents. Seems queer it should be named Iceland - not so cold as Newfoundland which is further south..

Stephen G. Stephenson.
1853 — 1927.
Famous Poet.
Faeddur A. Island 1853
Dauun 1927.

"Tho. you have trodden in travel
"all the wide trails of the earth
"Bear yet the dreams of your bosom
"Back to the land of your birth.

above writing is on that poet's cairn in their private cemetery just above the picturesque and slow flowing Medicine River. It is an inspiration to visit that small cemetery enclosed with heavy, square posts thro. which a heavy chain is pulled. The family cemetery is private & has heavy iron lattice gates.

Inside the cairn is a metal box holding his 6 volums of poems. There is a 7th. Volumn but it is of his correspondence, very interesting. Among other things of historical setting, we noted the dates & Post Office addresses on his letters. I believe it would tell, as well as anyway the progress of the Postal System for its Markerville settlers in ~~the~~ earliest days.

These are the addresses of the poet's letters, and the dates on them as we found them in his 7th volume – his correspondence:

Calgary – 17 June – 1881
Cash City – 22 Sept. – 1889.
" " – Dec. – 1889
" " – 28 May – 1890
" " – 19 July – 1890
" " – aug. – 1890
" " – 8 Oct. – 1890
" " – Dec. – 1890
" " – Jan – 1891
" " – 13 april – 1891
" " – aug. – 1891
" " – Sept. – 1891
Poplar Grove 25 Nov. – 1891
" " 8 Jan – 1892
Tindostall – 23 Oct. – 1892
" – 4 Mar. – 1893
11 Dec – 1893
14 Jan. – 1894
23 Mch. – 1895 (5)

He went Surveying – one letter addressed from
Pokan P. O. – Summer – 1896.
Tindostall – July – 1897
" – Oct. – 1897
" – ~~Dec~~. – 1897.
" – Dec. – 1897

Stephan G. Stephansen's letters (continued.)

Tindostall July - 1897
" Feb. -- 1902
" april - 1902
Markerville - 22 Dec. - 1902
11 april - 1909.

He died in 1927.

Then a letter was found and added:

Heima (HOME) -- Easter Sunday - 1909.
This was to Jones Hall.

That was his last letter.

across the trail from his house was the school house, on a hill, its name was Hola [meaning "hill."] That was in 1895 - 1896.

In 1897 was the Diamond Jubilee during Queen Victoria's reign.

This was the nearest school and the Stephansen's children all attended.

One of Stephansen's short poems, in English translation, reads:

"Bjórr F(ö)alerik pér."
Beer I bring thee
Bold Warrior
Brewage of good health
And greatest honour.

Only poetry in English in all 6 vol. of his poems of poetry.

I visited the old home of Stephen G. Stephensen, saw the bay window where he wrote poetry days — and the same desk where he wrote poetry nights and at which that vol. of correspondence was penned.
× × × × The family came in before the C. P. R. Railway did.

The name on the 6 volumns of poetry is ANDVÖKUR meaning. They date 1909–1923. 'SLEEPLESS---NIGHTS'
× × × × In 1873 he came to Wisconsin from Iceland being 20 years old, then. He was born in 1853 & Mrs. S. was born in 1859. They were first cousins & were married when she was 19 years of age & he 25 years of age — 1878.
They had 8 children — 4 boys born in N. Dak. and 3 girls & 1 boy born near Markerville Alberta.

Mrs. S. farmed and liked it.

He thought & took notes in fields and wrote nights

Wrote some poetry in N. Dak. but ~~bou~~ most of it was written here and at night, late at night, too, before the words had all been recorded.

In North Dakota he worked in lumber camps.

He, like all the early settlers, was hard up & worked hard. Once in Alberta he was away on a survey gang.

There were no bridges over any of the rivers when he first came - had to ford them.

He travelled to Calgary 2 times a year for groceries. He worked on the Rail Road construction gang when it was being put through.

June 17 - Markerville celebrates the birth day

Mr. S., farmer, poet, was very fond of animals & all wild life. No one dared carry a gun on his farm & his boys say he allowed no gun in his home. All wild life was precious to him.

He was a rather small ~~small~~ man, 5 ft. 6 in. tall, well set up, fair health, which was good until 1 year before his death, when he seemed "not quite up to par."

Mrs. S. had good health - 1 year before her death she fell & broke her hip. But plucky, as always, she got around the house by the aid of a cane & some times help from one children.

Mr. S. was self-educated — never went one day to any school. Well, then, what shall we say? Was that poetry inspired?

An Icelander translated this beautiful poem, "Toast to Alberta" to me, thus:

"You Province, You pretty Province,
"In the arms of the Mountains.
"You're our young foster Mother.
"Your Warm, your soft bosom
"By the warm morning sun
"With your Silver clear rivers
"And prairies and rocky palaces (halls.)
"With manya green spruce side hill.
"And glowing winter snows.
"You reach out your valley arms
"With ridges and hills & ravines,
"And manya wood where you can get shelter (from weather)
"With green prairie & hundreds of ripples of waters.
"And with bright nights in spring
"And Northern lights on your north-most mountains.

"And the white frost on the red rose on
damp summer morning
"and the spring-like winter clouds that
race across the sun.
"The winter-like clouds that race along in
summer.
"My young foster-mother surrounded by
mountains.
"For liberty and the good of the nation
stand guard
"Take to yan many an Icelander in exile.

[and goes on to say he wants Alta to grow,
as long as it can, with its frost and
steel to overrun against money
power & religious oppression.]

Mr. John Christiansen (Christ-vēn-sēn) translator-Librarian in Markerville.

The last year of Mr. S. he was almost an invalid. He had a stroke in Dec. 1926 & another in Aug. 1927 — never came out of that one.

I saw his hand-writing on a card. It was a good hand.

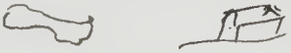
His wife nor any child could write poem

A Mr. Kirk Konnel translated for him.

Jacabina Johnson could & did translate for him & does his poems yet. She herself was a good poetess. She was in Iceland 2 years - going from Canada.

Their family met with tragedy, too. One 16 year old boy was killed by lightening. Then, while going home from her mother's funeral, one of the daughters was killed in an auto accident.

The Icelandic Govt. invited Mr. S. to come to Iceland - he was the guest of honour of that Govt. - and was taken to visit the place of his birth.

Upon his return to Canada, Mr. S. told an artist what his home in I. looked like. He was much pleased with the picture of small buildings just apposite the gap in the long ridge of hills a little like this. a beautiful scene.  A wonderful location near a little lake.

All of Mr. S.'s were paid to & from Iceland. When he was about to return to Can. the Govt. presented him with 5000 Kroners = More than $1000 in our coin.

In his favorite room I saw his glasses. a bookcase, a cane from Iceland (on his visit) with "Stephan G. Stephansen & name of place where it was presented to him Isfirdinguem. A harp of gold was on the top end - inlaid. Silver inlaid in beautiful patterns, elsewhere on it.

In the book case is the "Saga Library" of several large volumns. "Saga" means stories.

One book," Hallgrimmur Pjeturssson."

"Hymns & Biblical Poetry mostly.

One book by Jon Olafsson, "Humor & Songs".

There is one frame containing 18 Icelandic poets and writers: One was Hallgrimmur Pjetursson who wrote hymns & ~~humours~~ Biblical poems. One of Jon Olafsson, who wrote Humor and songs.

I saw a good bracket lamp - brass.

A good, fancy brass clock sitting on his desk.

A photo of Stevensen, the explorer and a dear friend of our poet.

One photo of our poet & his home in Iceland

" " " a sod church in I. where S. was confirmed.

Iceland presented S. with a very large oil painting - of Indians, bush land, teepees, an old Indian in the foreground.

Another very large oil painting depicting

Indians fleeing from a raging fire in the timber over the hills. 3 horses in that picture. 2 pack horses with an Indian running leading each horse and an Indian Squaw on the third horse. Human & horses looked weary in their desperate attempt to keep ahead of those raging, high flames.

Mr. Stephansen had more time to write poetry in his last years.

I saw a lovely photo of Mrs. S. standing beside Mr. S. cairn, there at their lovely, quiet, family cemetery.

Due credit must be extended to Mrs. S. who managed the work & raised a good, healthy family and travelled side by side with her poet husband - and still carried on after his death.

I think much of the beauty and grandeur of the "Toast to Alberta" as translated to me line by line, (as I have written in former pages) has been taken away in "To Albera" as found in "Readers" and elsewhere. Are they the same one?

Mr. Stephansen was a good swimmer — he taught all the young men (that are now older men) to swim, properly. He also taught them all to wrestle. He was ~~an~~ important on the Rifle Range in 1904.

Mrs. S. had "open house," even when so poor. "Come in & eat, boys" was her cheery invitation.

Pot-luck -- much or little in the house, always open house.

Porridge for supper," Come in," the same.

That inscription on his cairn was taken from one of his own poems, entitled:

"Remembrance."

I: "Tho' you have trodden in travel
"All the wide tracts of the earth,
"Bear yet the dreams of your bosom
"Back to the land of your birth.
"Kin of volcano & floe-sea!
"Cousin of geyser and steep!
"Daughter of downland & moorland!
"Son of the reef & the deep!"

II: "High over heaven & landscape
"Haunting your thot. as it strays,
"Torrents & towering summits
"Tremble once more to your gaze.
"Far in the uttermost ocean;
"The Isle of your heart is awake
"Shining in shadowless summer,
"Showered with light for your sake."

"Remembrance" (continued.)

Vivid that Icelandic vision
Viewed in your dreams as you run
Granite rocks growing with flowers,
Glaciers warm in the Sun.
O kin of volcano & floe-sea!
Cousin of geyser & steep!
Daughter of downland & moorland!
Son of the reef & the deep. -- Page 165. --

another of his odes to the Prairies he loved is:

"Northern Prairie."

"By prairie and slough-side the train that we rode
"Drove ever relentlessly north.
"To our left the great river lay turpid & red
"And sprawled itself sullenly forth.
"Its' breat never quickened in rapid or fall,
"Its dull, heavy waters were fain
"To waddle forever with arms full of mud
"And the slummocky clay of the plain.
"The landscape unchanged & unchangeable stood,
"Save only where dryads of grace
"Had woven on edges of wandering brooks,
"A leafy embroidery of lace.
"But the land itself lay like an infinite board,
"Unslivered, unknotted & clean,
"As if all the stuff of creation were smoothed
"And stained an ineffable green."

"Northern Prairie" was taken from page 166 of "The N.A. Book of Icelandic Verse."

Some boys had just returned from an Icelandic home and when asked by Mother if they were ready for supper, gave this answer: "No, how could we be hungry? We had coffee and "emblems of Iceland," meaning rolled jam pancakes.

Every home you enter, you must have coffee & lunch. Everyone!

Bjornsson means (bear Son.) All names of men & places mean some thing.

One of Mr. S. poems, "at Close of Day" "við verkalok", After all day's work is done.

The first 11 families & 3 bachelors, were:

1, Barney Johnson
2 Johann Bjornsson
3 Benidict Olafson.
4 Benidict Bardal (the freighter)
5 Sigurður Bjornsson.
[ð that d means & sounds like TH.)
6 Jonas Hunford
7 Dr. Einar Johnson (Homeopath.)
8 Olafur Goodman
9 Olafur Espihól
10 John Arnason.
11 Sigurður Joshua.

3 bachelors were:

Guðmundur Thorkalsson.
Olafur Benidictson
John Einarson.

All these 11 families and 3 bachelors came in 1888. These were the ones that sent 2 back. back to C. for lumber to make a boat to ferry all over the Big Red Deer River.

— — — — — Peter T. Thompson — — — — —

Mrs. Bruce Smith was a Miss Thompson & can recall her old parents' early life near M... The father's name was Peter Thompson, both he & his wife were Norwegians.

They came in 1902 from Duluth, with 5 children arriving May 9.

5 families came toq. — landing in D. May 9, 1902. Came out to homestead & celebrated their arrival on a large hill near the old homest.

Thompson house was built first & was large — all the 5 families lived in it at first after all had helped build it. They built other houses as they could.

Freighted stuff here from Duluth. Mrs. Smith has a high cupboard and a reflector bracket lamp in her kitchen, in the old house, yet.

Mrs. Thompson was a mid-wife. Dr. Allan came from D. on some cases, driving horses.

Dan Markeberg:-

Came here in ~~1903~~ 1899 to start the creamery. Stalid that Markerville was first named Tindostoll but because Dr. Marker, the Dairy Commissioner of Alberta, and Superintendent of Creameries of N.W.Ter. at that time, had so much to do, getting the Gov't. creamery started at that place, (replacing the cheese factory) that the settlers wanted to name their Post Office Markerville for Dr. Marker.

Mr. D. Markeberg and Dr. Marker formed an association and bought the old cheese factory & started up the creamery to make butter, as a Company.

Tindostoll means ~~Tindo ch~~ Stoll means chair or stool = and Tindo means in the highest peak or tinda of the Mountains.

At that time there were 30 Icelandic families — "~~Our~~ was the only Danish family."

Among these 30 families was the poet Laureate of Iceland, Stephan g. Stephansen.

The first school was Hola (hill) School. If you hear an Icelander say, "Dor he went to Hola School" — in Iceland that means the highest schooling possible there. Dor he was very well educated.

The first school at Tindostall was log.

The first creamery and one store were the only 2 bldgs. with shingles.

Mr. M. has made many trips to C. with open.

Nearest Doctor was at Calgary. "We just could not afford to be sick."

Heckla was another later D. school. Heckla in Iceland was the very biggest volcano. All the material for Markerville wooden bldgs. was hauled in from Calgary.

The first bridge over the Medicine River out there was at Hola School. Later, when iron bridge was built there the swinging bridge was bought by Mr. M. & put across same river at M. — because his house is directly across from M., so instead of going around by iron bridge just east of M. — he & his family & friends could go across on swinging bridge. It has been taken out, now.

In 19 ~~17~~ 21, during the "landslide" in the Govt., Mr. M. became M. L. A..

[Captain Eric M. has returned from over-seas from the war & was given a grand reception. He is a son of Dan's.

Some of the names Mr. M. gave me & the dates of arrival, were:

Johan Bjornsson 1888
Joseph Stephansen 1889
Stephan g. Stephansen 1889 (poet.)
John Christiansen 1889 (translator.)

This latter gentleman has a set of 6 vol. of S.g.S. poems & the only one I saw of S.g.S. letters Being his 7 vol..

Senecca root, a'plenty, at first, all along the Red. R.. None, now. Indians used it extensive as a medicine.

In Iceland ~~it set.~~ the woman takes her own name, even after marriage but adds "the wife of Mr.—". A man takes his fathers first name & adds son to that.

Mr. M. took me all thro. the M. modern creamery at M.. A credit to man & vicinity.

Mrs. Markeberg gave me the fol. recipes:

Vina tarta:
make 7 layers:
4 eggs
1 cup shortening
½ cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
Cordamom ½ teasp. ground up.
3 teasp. Bak. Pow.
flour to make like cookie dough.
Spread out flat and round.

Put this filling on:
25 cents. prunes.
boil and then stone
put on to boil again with
a little water,
½ cup sugar & cordamon,
Boil tog. till thick.
Put between 7
layers. Bake.
Looks nice & eats nice.
Cuts like cake—cold.

II: "Punnakukur:"

given me by several ladies of Iceland.

Make real thin paukake dough,
Put some into iron skillet,
turn it & let get all around,
Bake. Spread with jam.
Roll up. [Boys called these "Emblems of Iceland."
Eat with coffee for lunches.

III: Rosettes: Dip an iron (with depressions like a patty pan) into batter. Bake brown; Turn. Good.

"Rüllüpÿlsür."
[Meat roll.]

Take a large slice of meat, lay it flat.
Spread with cloves, allspice, pepper, salt,
a very little salt petre, chipped onion.
Roll up very tight onto board. Turn board over.
Put on heavy weights to flatten it & press well tog..
Later wrap in wax paper. Keeps well.

Cookies:

1 lb. white flour,
1 teasp. Bak. Pow.
½ lb. butter.
¼ lb. sugar.
2 eggs.
Melt butter, add sugar & B.P.
Knead a little with rolling pin, to flatten.
Cut out into cookies.
Put some sugar & almonds on top dough.
Bake. Beat up egg white for top with little sugar.

I came across an old "Province" for Sept. 24-1908 where the change of paper names occurred. It was the last copy of the "Free Lance" before it was joined with the "Innisfail Province" into one.

In it I came across this article:

"The Creameries Increase Output" dated at Edmonton, Sept. 21, 1908. We look for an increase of 20% over last year in the output of the creameries of Alta. Then it went on to quote extensively Mr. Marker on that important industry.

Markerville, Icelandic
Settlement.